

Application No. 09/432,927
Amendment dated July 13, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 17, 2006

REMARKS

Status Of Application

Claims 1-13 were pending in the application; the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,996,002 to Katsurabayashi ("Katsurabayashi").

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katsurabayashi.

Claims 3, 6, 8, and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim Amendments

Claims 3, 6, 8, and 13 have been amended to place them in independent form. These changes do not introduce any new matter.

Objection

Claims 3, 6, 8, and 11 have been amended to place them in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3, 6, 8, and 13 are in condition for allowance.

35 U.S.C. § 102(e) Rejection

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 9-12 have been cancelled, thereby mooted their rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Katsurabayashi.

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35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

Claim 7 has been amended to depend from allowable claim 3. It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that claim 7 is also allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 3 is allowable.

CONCLUSION

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment does not increase the number of independent claims, does not increase the total number of claims, and does not present any multiple dependency claims. Accordingly, no fee based on the number or type of claims is currently due. However, if a fee, other than the issue fee, is due, please charge this fee to Sidley Austin LLP Deposit Account No. 18-1260.

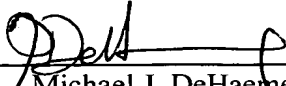
If an extension of time is required to enable this document to be timely filed and there is no separate Petition for Extension of Time filed herewith, this document is to be construed as also constituting a Petition for Extension of Time Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for a period of time sufficient to enable this document to be timely filed.

Any other fee required for such Petition for Extension of Time and any other fee required by this document pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17, other than the issue fee,

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and not submitted herewith should be charged to Sidley Austin LLP Deposit Account
No. 18-1260. Any refund should be credited to the same account.

Respectfully submitted,

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